

Allen-Scott Report

Intelligence Indicates Target Of Assassin in Cuba Was Castro

By ROBERT S. ALLEN and PAUL SCOTT

Premier Fidel Castro was the real target of that mystery-cloaked assassination attempt being vigorously denied by officials of his Communist regime.

The assassins' wild-flying bullets, one nicking Carlos Rafael Rodriguez in the leg, struck all around Castro as he and Rodriguez emerged from a government building in Havana on Jan. 12.



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Castro and Rodriguez were about two feet apart when the rain of bullets began pouring from sub-machineguns manned by two persons riding in a speeding Czechoslovakian built jeep.

The assassins and their driver, all of whom escaped, were dressed in Soviet Army uniforms. Their jeep was similar to those used by units of Castro's own army.

THESE ARE THE intriguing details that U. S. intelligence agencies have pieced together from information Castro has circulated among his own security forces.

One of his messages, ordering massive new security measures throughout the entire island, left no doubt he was the assassins' target. It flatly reported that the stricter security precautions were being put in force to prevent a new attempt on Castro's life. No mention of Rodriguez was made.

From the wording of Castro's message, and other intelligence too sensitive to reveal at this time, one group of U. S. intelligence officers is convinced the Russians may have planned the shooting to replace Castro with a more "stable" Communist leader.

This unconfirmed premise is based on findings that none of the Cuban underground, with whom U. S. officials are in contact, were involved in the assassination attempt or even knew about it ahead of time.

THE SHOOTING, later confirmed by these anti-Castro Cubans, caught them completely by surprise. Also, they have been unable to furnish any hard information on who the actual assassins might be.

There is even speculation by these Cuban sources that Rodriguez, boss of Cuba's powerful National Institute of Agrarian Reform, may have set up Castro for the assassination attempt.

Rodriguez, who received a flesh wound in the attack, is known to feel that Castro's recklessness might touch off a military incident that would bring a U. S. invasion of Cuba.

In line with Soviet policy, Rodriguez favors avoiding any military clash with the U.S. in order to keep Cuba as a base for Communist subversion and espionage throughout Latin America.

Rodriguez's importance in Cuban-Soviet affairs has been underlined by his recent trips to Russia and other Iron Curtain countries to discuss policies. His support, while a Communist party member, of ousted Dictator Fulgencio Batista has never set well with Castro.

LOOKING THEM OVER — The Navy is again playing "cat and mouse" with Soviet ships believed to be carrying new arms to Cuba.

In one of a series of unpublicized incidents, a U.S. Navy destroyer last week "closed" on a Russian ship sailing toward Cuba while it was approximately 100 miles from Havana.

When the U.S. naval commander, on orders from the chief of naval operations, asked the Soviet skipper to identify his vessel and reveal its destination, the Russian flatly refused.

After a series of rapid message exchanges carried all the way to the White House, the U.S. destroyer commander was instructed to permit the Soviet ship to proceed. During the communications, the commander asked for, but was denied, permission to stop and search the ship to determine the contents of its cargo.

Surveillance of the ship was ordered after U. S. Naval Intelligence sounded a warning that the Russian vessel was en route to Cuba with a cargo of "undetermined" arms. The vessel had been loaded at the same Black Sea port from which Soviet medium-range missiles were shipped to Cuba last September.

Also, the Russian ship was in constant contact with the Kremlin's main radio center just outside Moscow. The ships that had originally brought the IL-28 bombers to Cuba made this type of radio contact while en route from Russia to Cuba.